

August 7, 2007

## **FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT**

A Finance Committee meeting was held Tuesday, August 7, 2007 at 2:30 p.m. in the County Administration Building, Quorum Court meeting Room, 215 East Central, Bentonville, Arkansas.

Committee Members Present: Harrison, Hobbs, Stephenson, Summers, Moore, Wolf, Wozniak

Others Present: Richard McComas, Michele Anderson, Kathy Bannister

Media: Scarlet Simms – Morning News; Jennifer Turner – Benton County Daily Record

JP Tim Summers called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

None

#### **1. County Attorney: Legal Fees**

Comptroller Richard McComas stated that there have been several appeals requiring expert witnesses and additional expenses, so a budget adjustment of \$20,000 will be needed for Legal Fees in the County Attorney's office. He added that County General will be reimbursed for the work done on behalf of those offices.

#### **2. Grants Administrator Report: \$26,000 Courthouse Reconstruction**

Richard McComas stated that a \$26,000 Courthouse reconstruction Grant and a \$75,000 grant for bridge repairs will be appropriated through the Budget Adjustment ordinance. Grants Administrator Kathy Bannister stated that the Piney Point VFD is applying for a Rural Services grant to build a fire station, so they will need to pass a resolution authorizing the County Judge to make the application. JP Wolf made motion to forward the resolution request to the August 14, 2007 Committee of Thirteen Meeting, seconded by JP Stephenson. Motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

#### **3. Election Commission: Rent**

Richard McComas stated that the County Judge has negotiated a lease for office space for the Election Commission at a cost of \$59,050 per year. JP Wolf made motion to include the cost in the Budget Adjustment Ordinance, seconded by JP Moore. JP Hobbs listed several other spaces available for less rent. The committee discussed the needs of the Election Commission. JP Moore stated that he would like for the Election Commission officials to look at these other spaces before the Committee of Thirteen meeting, and if they find something cheaper that would be suitable, he would support making a change. JP Stephenson noted that property and buildings are under the auspices of the County

Judge's office. JP Summers stated he will support this choice of space because it was located by the Election Commission based on their needs. Motion passed— 6 in favor, 1 opposed (JP Hobbs).

#### **4. Prosecuting Attorney Office: Rent Increase**

Richard McComas stated that a \$500 per month increase in rent for the Prosecuting Attorney's office will need to be included in the Budget Adjustment Ordinance, and noted that the County Judge was able to get the increase reduced from the original \$800 requested, but they now have a 1-year lease instead of a 5-year lease. JP Stephenson made motion to include the increase in the Budget Adjustment Ordinance, and forward it to the August 14, 2007 Committee of Thirteen meeting, seconded by JP Wolf. The committee discussed the availability of cheaper office spaces, and the need for the county to develop a comprehensive study of the County's future office space needs. JP Summers noted that location is more critical for the Prosecuting Attorney's office. Motion passed—6 in favor, 1 opposed (JP Harrison).

#### **5. Health Department: Siloam Springs Office Rent**

Richard McComas stated that the lease for the County Health Department was not renewed this year, so they are currently without a facility. The committee discussed the need for a Health Department office in Siloam Springs, and the various services that are provided. JP Summers directed County Health Department Director Loy Bailey to try to work with the City of Siloam Springs to try to find a suitable location and come back to the committee with a proposal.

#### **6. Mid-year Budget Adjustments**

Richard McComas stated that these are mostly items that have been approved throughout the year. He said in Maintenance, they will adjust for the fire alarm and security system in the courthouse, a new roof on the JDC, an AC unit in Judge Keith's office, rents for the Collector and Assessor's offices, and the rents for the Election Commission and Prosecuting Attorney's offices discussed today. He stated that they will appropriate the \$26,000 grant that they just received for wiring in the courthouse, and will reduce the road transfer by \$28,000 to adjust for the purchase of the shredder.

Richard McComas stated that the Live Fingerprint Scan system will simply require money to be moved from another line item, they will appropriate a \$6,400 grant for court reporting in Department 64. He said they discussed Legal Fees in the County Attorney's office earlier, and 2006 unemployment taxes, which are reimbursements of payments actually made by the State. He added that by using the reimbursement method rather than a percentage method, they have saved \$150,000 to \$200,000 per year.

Richard McComas stated that the appropriation for LEPC is for \$6,900 in grant money, and some money had to be moved to Capital for a purchase in 9-1-1 that exceeded \$5,000. He said that they will make an adjustment for the \$75,000 grant discussed today for bridge repair, and for a \$53,000 grant for a Homeland Security Exercise. Richard McComas stated that they will probably do another Budget Adjustment Ordinance at the end of the year, and possibly another one in the spring after 2007 is closed out.

JP Wolf made motion to forward an ordinance request to the August 14, 2007 Committee of Thirteen meeting, seconded by JP Wozniak. Motion passed by unanimous show of hands vote.

#### **7. Sales Tax Numbers**

Richard McComas stated that sales tax increased 3.5% with Bella Vista's receipts added in, and he still believes they will have a net gain for the year, although it will not be the \$323,000 projected.

#### **8. Jail Collections**

Richard McComas stated that some back payments have been received from the State, which puts them above projections for the month, but they are still behind for the year.

#### **9. Monthly Expenditures**

Michele Anderson stated that they should be at 58.33%, and those that are over are due to capital expenditures or budget adjustments that will be addressed in the upcoming ordinance. She said that General Fund is at 56.93%, County Road is at 59.19%, and Other Funds Total is at 50.88%.

#### **10. Fuel Analysis**

Richard McComas stated that consumption is about the same as last year, but that fuel prices have stayed higher than projected. JP Summers asked if Travis Harp could attend the September Finance Committee meeting to discuss the Road Department fuel costs.

#### **11. Other Business**

Richard McComas stated that the repeater which provides the radio signal to CenCom for Centerton, Pea Ridge, and Little Flock has gone out and will need to be replaced at a cost of \$10,000.

JP Summers announced that the next Finance Committee meeting will be Tuesday, September 4, 2007 at 2:30 p.m.

After motion and second the meeting adjourned at 3:38 p.m.